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STATUS OF PREPARATION OF PUBLICATIONS, STUDIES AND
DOCUMENTS FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Contribution from the Conference on Security
and Cooperation in Europe

1. The attention of the Preparatory Committee is drawn to the attached contribution, entitled "A contributing paper for the World Conference on Human Rights" submitted by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.
2. The paper describes the activities of the Warsaw-based Office for Free Elections (OFE) which, since April 1991, has organized successful seminars and observer assistance programmes in Bulgaria, Poland, Albania, Romania, Estonia, Georgia, Lithuania and the former republics of Yugoslavia. It has also provided expert assistance, when requested, on draft electoral laws. The OFE was transformed into the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), when it assumed broader responsibilities within the CSCE's "Human Dimension" mechanism negotiated at the Vienna Follow-up Meeting (1986-1989). Under this mechanism, a mission may be sent to carry out an investigative mission in a State and to report and propose solutions to possible human rights problems. If a State refuses a mission on its territory, a mandatory mission may be dispatched with the required support of other CSCE States.

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This mechanism has been implemented as concerns reports of atrocities and attacks on unarmed civilians in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, as regards the compatibility of Estonian legislation with international human rights norms, and as regards the implementation of minority rights in Moldova.

3. The ODIHR has also established a database in Warsaw which deals primarily with elections but also other matters such as democratic institution-building, human rights, census taking and national minorities. As regards the latter, in July 1992, the CSCE created the post of High Commissioner on National Minorities, whose mandate is to promote dialogue among interested parties in order to avoid possible conflict. In December 1992 the Stockholm Council of Foreign Ministers appointed former Dutch Foreign Minister Max van der Stoep as the CSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities.

4. At the 1992 CSCE Helsinki Summit, the participating States declared the CSCE to be a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and called for closer cooperation with the United Nations. The CSCE and the United Nations are currently cooperating in implementing United Nations resolutions on the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN
EUROPE
OFFICE FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND
HUMAN RIGHTS

A CONTRIBUTING PAPER FOR
THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Warsaw, Poland
April 1993

Introduction

Since the early 1970s, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe has been an on-going, multilateral security forum involving Europe and North America. The Helsinki Process (as the CSCE is often called) has provided a useful instrument to influence East-West relationships. Keeping alive dialogue and a minimum of co-operation in times of tensions, it has also served as an ideological battleground between western governments seeking to undermine the legitimacy of communist regimes and the East Bloc aiming at the recognition of its post-war territorial status. With consensus among the participating States required for all decisions, the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 included a comprehensive code of conduct encompassing major areas of international relations, such as security matters, humanitarian concerns, aspects of economic relations, information, education and culture.

At the Meeting of Heads of State and Governments of the CSCE participating States in Paris (November 1990), a new Charter of principles was adopted which took stock of the changes that had taken place in Europe. These changes opened a new opportunity to establish institutional arrangements in the field of political and military security, as well as in the field of the human dimension. The Paris Charter addressed a variety of issues ranging from security, human rights, free and fair elections, the rule of law, democratic institutions to economic liberty, culture and the environment. To meet the challenges of the changing European political environment, the leaders of the CSCE States agreed to create institutional structures within the CSCE, such as the Office for Free Elections, later renamed the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in Warsaw, the CSCE Secretariat in Prague, and the Conflict Prevention Center in Vienna. In attempts to add to further improvements in the operational capacity of the CSCE, a decision has been made at a recent CSCE Council Meeting (Stockholm, Dec. 1992) to establish the post of Secretary General, who will also be responsible, among other tasks, for the management of CSCE structures and operations.

The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, which is responsible for the "Human Dimension" of the CSCE -- furthering human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, acts both independently and at the direction of the CSCE's Committee of Senior Officials. The ODIHR's broad range of responsibilities include: monitoring the implementation of the CSCE Human Dimension commitments; managing the "Human Dimension Mechanism;" organizing international seminars on the human dimension, including seminars for the newly admitted participating States; supporting the new CSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities; serving as a clearinghouse for information on democracy-building programs. At the same time, the ODIHR maintains responsibilities stemming from its original mandate as the Office for Free Elections, continuing to work towards the further establishment of a tradition of democratic elections in the region by

organizing seminars, arranging exchanges of experts, and assisting international election observers. In addition, in accordance with the Stockholm Council Meeting of December 1992, the preparations for the establishment of the Foundation for Promoting Human Rights in the CSCE has been initiated.

Office for Free Elections

Being essentially a political process, the CSCE owes its involvement in election rights to the new political landscape that emerged in the early 1990's with the crumbling of the old East-West divide and the support for democracy in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The CSCE Charter of Paris (Nov. 1990) gave a solemn endorsement to the new standards on elections elaborated at the CSCE Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension (June 1990). In its opening chapter (paragraph 5.1) the CSCE scope is further extended to add concern for the freedom of expression of electors in the choice of their representatives. The new CSCE standards meant the necessity to monitor these new norms; and the presence of observers during the electoral process constituted the first readily available means of some kind of political compliance. The endorsement by international observers of a democratically contested election is essential to the new governments, inasmuch as the withdrawal of support by international observers for the electoral process may be a critical arm against governments at home and internationally. The procedure for compliance with election rights, as envisaged in various declarations, resulted in the creation of the CSCE Office for Free Elections in Warsaw.

With the OFE beginning its work in April 1991, its original mandate was to assist the new democracies in Europe in further establishing a tradition of free elections and, whenever possible, to provide assistance to new democracies in the field of electoral administration and coordination among individuals and groups monitoring electoral process.

Responding quickly to the wave of elections in the region, the OFE, taking into account the work and co-operation with other institutions, primary the Council of Europe, established assistance programs in countries holding parliamentary and presidential elections, as well as constitutional or other referenda. As a general rule, the Office invited international experts from North America and Western Europe (and increasingly from Eastern Europe as well) to election seminars held for national and local election officials. The OFE also serves as a channel for information between the main international delegations and the central election authorities, and provides necessary information and logistical assistance to the observers.

This pattern of assistance has been maintained and expanded in electoral contests in the region. The Office has organized successful seminars and observers assistance programs in Bulgaria, Poland, Albania, Romania, Estonia, Georgia, Lithuania, and the former republics of Yugoslavia. It has also co-sponsored

the establishment of the Regional Association of Electoral Officials for Central and Eastern Europe, a professional association for electoral experts which is now being expanded to include members from the former Soviet Union. At the request of some countries, the Office has reviewed draft electoral law to see if they meet CSCE standards and has coordinated international experts' commentary on the laws of Bulgaria, Albania, and Yugoslavia.

Human Dimension Mechanism

Soon after its establishment, the OFE began to take on a broader range of responsibilities within the CSCE's "Human Dimension," which foreshadowed the Office's eventual transformation into the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. At the direction of the CSCE's Committee of Senior Officials, the Director served as rapporteur in several fact-finding missions to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Serbia--including Kosovo and Vojvodina. The Director and Deputy Director also participated in rapporteur missions to the newly admitted CSCE states: Albania, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Among the most important new duties of the ODIHR is its responsibility for managing the "Human Dimension Mechanism." The original mechanism, negotiated at the Vienna Follow-up Meeting (1986-89) and renewed and enhanced at a series of the CSCE Conferences of the Human Dimension (1990-91), mandates more effective exchange of information leading to bilateral follow-up meetings on cases and situations in the human dimension. Drawn from an official list of experts appointed by the CSCE participating States, a mission may be sent to report and propose solutions to possible human rights problems, following the activation of the Mechanism by the concerned State or by other participating States. If a mission of good office is deemed unsatisfactory or, if a state refuses a mission on its territory, a mandatory mission may be dispatched with the required support of other CSCE States. In cases of emergency, ten States may dispatch a compulsory mission without going first through the good offices phase. In addition, individual States may request the services of these experts in order to assist them in the further establishment of human rights standards and practices in their countries. Individual cases of violation of human dimension commitments may be brought by participating States through the mechanism paying due regard to whether the case is already sub judice in an international legal procedure. Thus far, the Human Dimension Mechanism has been activated three times: firstly, by the twelve States of the European Community and the United States vis-a-vis Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina on the issue of reports of atrocities and attacks on unarmed civilians; secondly, by Estonia to study Estonian legislation and to compare it, and its implementation, with universally accepted human rights norms; thirdly, by Moldova to investigate current legislation and implementation of minorities rights and inter-ethnic relations

on the territory of Moldova.

Seminars

The ODIHR is mandated to organize a variety of seminars either upon the request of the CSCE or at the invitation of institutions and States. The first CSCE mandated seminar, which focused on "Tolerance," took place in Warsaw, November 16-20, 1992. Delegations from nearly all participating States attended, as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations and international institutions. The discussion concentrated on three main subjects: the role of educational and cultural institutions as well as media in promoting tolerance; the role of local authorities in promoting tolerance; legal issues and law enforcement. In 1993, the Office will host seminars on migration, national minorities, and on the free media. The ODIHR in co-operation with another CSCE institution, the Conflict Prevention Center, will also organize seminars to help share experiences and increase knowledge of issues and techniques in the fields of early warning and peacekeeping.

In addition to these large seminars, the Office organizes a number of smaller meetings. Most of these are part of a program of coordinated support specifically designed to meet the needs of the newly admitted States of the CSCE. Whenever possible, these meetings take place in the new States and are geared to civil servants, the media, and the public at large. The ODIHR has already supported one such seminar for government officials from the new States, in parallel with the Helsinki Follow-up Meeting, and it later co-sponsored a series of seminars on Constitutional Law for the Islamic republics of the former Soviet Union, on Citizenship and Language Laws in the Newly Independent States of Europe, and on Juridical Reform and the Reform of Law in the Republic of Moldova. The Human Dimension seminars were an occasion to establish contacts and develop co-operation with various non-governmental organizations and international organizations, such as the specialized agencies of the United Nations, namely the UNDP, UNESCO or the UNHCR. The ODIHR has established a register of NGOs active in the field of the Human Dimension.

Finally, every year in which a follow-up review conference of the CSCE does not take place, the ODIHR will organize at its seat a three-week meeting at expert-level of all participating States to address and review implementation of CSCE Human Dimension commitments. The meeting will focus on a thorough exchange of views and evaluation of the procedures for monitoring and compliance with commitments, including the reports of CSCE missions, with considerations given on ways and means of further improvement.

The ODIHR Clearinghouse

Since its inception, the ODIHR has been expanding its

clearinghouse function to include a broad range of human rights topics. It is now collecting information from CSCE states to add to its database in Warsaw, which until now has been mainly related to elections. New information which will be available to interested governments, NGOs, research institutions, and individuals will include the following topics: Democratic Institution-building (government and non-governmental programs, publications and studies, points of contact); Human Rights (reports on compliance, information on programs promoting human rights); Census-taking (points of contact, experts and institutes in the field, assistance programs); and, National Minorities. A publication of the Human Dimension Handbook for Human Dimension experts/rapporteurs and election observers is already available to all interested parties upon request. Finally, the ODIHR is issuing a quarterly Bulletin keeping track of the latest activities in the field of the CSCE human dimension.

High Commissioner on National Minorities

Established at the Helsinki Follow-up Meeting in July 1992, the High Commissioner has been given a mandate to investigate problems related to national minorities by gathering information, including on-site missions, and promoting dialogue over situations which, in his/her opinion, have the potential to develop into conflict. In identifying and containing at the earliest possible stage tensions involving national minority issues which have the potential to develop into a conflict within the CSCE area, the High Commissioner will consult and report to the Chair-in-Office. If the High Commissioner considers the results of discussions at all levels with parties directly involved unsatisfactory, he/she may issue an early warning, which will be put on the agenda of the main decision-making body of the CSCE (the Committee of Senior Officials). Further action by the High Commissioner aimed at resolving the issue, or action on questions already under consideration by the Committee of Senior Officials, requires consensus of the CSCE participating States. In carrying its mandate, the High Commissioner will not consider violations of CSCE commitments with regard to an individual person belonging to a national minority.

The Stockholm Council of Foreign Ministers (December 1992) appointed former Dutch Foreign Minister Max van der Stoep as CSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities. The ODIHR is currently providing the Office of the High Commissioner with administrative and information service.

Relations with the United Nations

At the outset of the institutionalization of the CSCE process, co-operation with the United Nations was established. In the general elections in Albania (March, 1992), the OFE collaborated with the UN in monitoring the electoral process. At the CSCE Helsinki Summit 1992, a new phase of relations was inaugurated. Heads of State and Governments of the participating

States declared the CSCE to be a regional arrangement in the sense of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter and called for closer co-operation between the CSCE and the UN. A CSCE human rights rapporteur mission to Bosnia-Herzegovina (August 1992) co-operated with the UN on the inspection of detention camps and other alleged human rights abuses which led to the direct representation of the CSCE at the London and Geneva Conferences on Yugoslavia. Similarly, a certain degree of co-ordination existed between the Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights, Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, and the CSCE/ODIHR Mission to Croatia under the Human Dimension Mechanism (30 September to 5 October 1992). The same applies to co-operation between the UN and ODIHR mission to Moldova, the Long Duration Mission in Georgia and the CSCE Spill-over Mission in Skopje (Macedonia). As a follow-up to the recommendations of the Human Dimension Mission to Croatia that personal responsibility for war crimes be considered as well as the establishment of an ad hoc tribunal, proposals for setting up such a tribunal were drafted by the Mission and transmitted to the UN Security Council for examination.

The 16th CSCE Committee of Senior Officials (18 September, 1992), in close co-operation with the European Community, endorsed the establishment of Sanctions Assistance Missions in States neighboring Serbia and Montenegro to help implement UN Security Council resolutions #713 imposing an arms embargo against all the republics of the former Yugoslavia and #757 imposing mandatory sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. The 19th Committee of Senior Officials later established the post of EC/CSCE Sanctions Coordinator to further improve, inter alia, liaison with the UN Security Council and Sanctions Committee.

In response to a letter from the UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali requesting CSCE in situ assistance in implementing UN resolutions on the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina, CSCE has declared its readiness to co-ordinate individual or collective contributions by its members to peacekeeping activities including supervision of heavy weapons of the parties involved in the conflict.

The United Nations is invited to make contributions, take part in the information exchange, and/or attend CSCE meetings and seminars as guests of honor. While a proposal by the UN Secretary General to the CSCE to seek observer status at the CSCE is currently under examination, a decision has been made on the part of the CSCE to invite a representative of the United Nations Secretary General to the meetings of the Council of Ministers and the Committee of Senior Officials of the CSCE.

Conclusions

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe underwent significant development in the post-communist period. More extensive procedures were developed and steps were taken towards establishing effective permanent institutions which would provide a forum for more regular political consultations and meetings on an increasing number of topics relevant to its participants whose membership was brought up to 53 states in 1993.

The CSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights was established to meet some of those challenges of the changing European political environment of the 1990s. As the Office attempts to fulfill its Human Dimension responsibilities, it also faces few limitations on the way.

One procedural limitation of the ODIHR is connected with the political nature of the CSCE. Having no legally binding instruments of monitoring or enforcement, in cases of violation of the CSCE commitments by participating State(s), the ODIHR can only exert political pressure upon the concerned state; and in most cases, it can only rely on the goodwill of the state to carry out its implementation procedures. The Office may suggest an inquiry into an alleged breach of human dimension commitments and draw the attention of relevant CSCE bodies to cases of violation, but it cannot initiate the Human Dimension Mechanism itself. The ODIHR can best be described as the "conveyor belt" of CSCE exchange and action on specific issues related to its human dimension.

To some extent, the activities of the ODIHR are also conditioned by the self-imposed structure of the CSCE institutions. The CSCE, being essentially a political process, is a state-based organization dependent on political decisions made at the highest level, and as a result the ODIHR's mandate is to respond only to state requests. As the mandate of the Office in the area of human rights is reactive to participating States, the ODIHR may act on cases and human dimension issues, i.e. send observers, only when an official mandate is given. Such a mandate comes from either the CSCE as a whole or by appropriate procedures spelled out in CSCE Documents. The ODIHR cannot act upon individual petitions brought to the attention by a concerned party itself, despite the increasing frequency of such individual requests for information and representations, with which ODIHR has been faced.

The future of the CSCE process will thus depend on its ability to further improve procedures and management of all the new activities, as well as on its ability to adapt to its changing role while remaining an effective political force which retains its original institutional flexibility and directness.

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STATUS OF PREPARATION OF PUBLICATIONS, STUDIES
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Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 45/155, the General Assembly, inter alia, encouraged the Chairmen of human rights expert bodies to take part in the work of the Preparatory Committee. Pursuant to paragraph 11 of the same resolution, whereby the Secretary-General was requested to submit to the Preparatory Committee a report on these contributions, an interim report on the study of United Nations human rights treaty bodies,* prepared by Mr. Philip Alston, is enclosed.

* The study is to be circulated separately, at a later date.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This is an interim report on a thoroughly revised and updated version of a study originally prepared at the request of the General Assembly in 1989. Since that time many of the recommendations contained in the original report have been acted upon. Those matters are therefore not dealt with again in the present version of the study.

2. The treaty régime (along with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) constitutes the cornerstone of international human rights endeavours (paras. 53-71). Its development is one of the great achievements of the United Nations.

3. That régime has reached a critical crossroads. Its successful future evolution demands that the magnitude and urgency of existing challenges be recognized, that the vital importance of the treaty régime as a whole be reaffirmed and that the quest for creative and effective solutions be pursued with energy and commitment. In doing so, care must be taken to ensure that the integrity of the system, and particularly its ability to safeguard human rights, are not sacrificed to illusory notions of streamlining and efficiency (paras. 7-13).

4. At the time of the Teheran Conference in 1968 not a single human rights treaty body existed. Only a quarter of a century later there are seven. Over the last decade the complexity, reach and potential significance of the treaty régime have expanded enormously. Between 1989 and 1992 alone, the number of States parties to the principal treaties increased by 27 per cent. By the year 2000 there could well be an average of 160 States parties to each of the six treaties, thus generating almost 1,000 reports per reporting cycle and up to 2,000 pages of annual committee reports containing an extensive array of materials of jurisprudential significance (paras. 23-41).

5. In at least some respects, reform of the treaty régime is closely linked to reform of the overall human rights programme. That programme has grown exponentially over the past decade through a process of cumulative incrementalism rather than planned evolution. The question arises as to whether an overview study of selected aspects of the long-term development of the Charter-based system should be undertaken, either by the Secretary-General or one or more independent experts (paras. 15-22).

6. The existing heavy demands upon the Centre for Human Rights seem certain to grow even more rapidly in the years ahead. Already the disparity between demands made and resources provided has exacerbated the situation. Of the many areas affected by

these problems, the present study focuses in particular upon four which are in urgent need of overall review: advisory services, public information, collaboration with other United Nations bodies and agencies, and the relationship between United Nations human rights bodies and their regional counterparts (paras. 15-22).

7. The treaty bodies have become increasingly intertwined with the overall human rights programme of the United Nations. While this phenomenon is greatly to be welcomed, there is a difficult line that must be maintained between, on the one hand, promoting the most effective degree of interaction and, on the other hand, ensuring that the distinctive characteristics of the committees' treaty supervisory functions are not inappropriately blurred or even lost (paras. 53-71).

8. For many reasons, including the possibility to pursue the complex question of the role of cultural factors in the application of human rights norms, universal participation by all countries of the six principal treaties is a goal of the utmost importance (paras. 72-75).

9. The existing level of participation is only around 60 per cent for the Covenants and as low as 40 per cent for the Convention against Torture. Efforts to date to improve this record have been piecemeal, excessively reliant upon repeated exhortation, and lacking in depth as well as resources (paras. 76-80).

10. The United Nations should immediately adopt a three-point programme designed to achieve universality:

(a) Universal acceptance of the package of six core treaties should be identified as one of the foundation stones of the human rights programme. In addition, the six States which are parties to only one of the two International Human Rights Covenants should be urged to ratify the other as soon as possible (para. 82).

(b) The programme should target specific issues to be pursued and develop effective strategies for addressing them. For example, attention should be paid to the specific problems and concerns of the 30 States with a population of two million or less which have not ratified either Covenant. If measures could be devised to enable these States to ratify or accede the total number of parties to the Covenants could rise by some 25 per cent (paras. 83-88).

(c) A target date for achieving universality should be set (the year 2000) and a strategy devised for achieving it. Implementation of the programme should be overseen by specialists and resources should be earmarked for related activities (paras. 89-90).

11. Reporting procedures are of central importance to the international human rights régime. Reporting should be viewed as a multi-faceted undertaking that serves a variety of objectives both domestically and internationally (paras. 91-94).

12. The role of the international treaty bodies is essentially catalytic. The primary role in the reporting process belongs to the relevant actors at the national level. Ideally the treaty bodies major function should be to monitor the domestic monitors. The treaty bodies should focus more systematically on the following issues: (a) dissemination, in local languages, of the text of the relevant instrument; (b) the modalities of preparation of the State report; (c) the submission of information to the treaty body from diverse sources in connection with the examination of State reports; and (d) national level discussion of the results of the Committee-State party dialogue (paras. 95-102).

13. The current level of overdue reports (in excess of 1,000) is chronic and entirely unacceptable. As long as it is tolerated, the credibility of the entire régime is threatened, Governments become accustomed to ignoring their obligations, and the criticisms of those who portray the reporting system as toothless or ineffectual are partly vindicated (paras. 103-111).

14. Ironically, the treaty system is able to function at present by relying upon the continuing delinquency of States parties. Once this problem is resolved, however, major reforms of the present system will be unavoidable (para. 106).

15. Rather than seeking to identify appropriate incentives and disincentives to address this issue, both the treaty bodies and the political organs have tended simply to exhort States to report. It is imperative that this problem now be addressed with determination and imagination.

16. Four steps should be considered: (a) The provision of advisory services, of a very different kind to those presently on offer, to States parties whose reports are more than two years overdue; (b) the immunity from scrutiny, currently enjoyed by non-reporting States, must be removed by scheduling the situation in those States for examination, even in the absence of a report; (c) States parties whose reports are long overdue should be listed by name in resolutions adopted by the Charter-based organs; and (d) States parties should be provided with a positive incentive to report by virtue of the availability of additional technical assistance (paras. 109-122).

17. States are currently subject to an excessive number of demands for information on human rights matters. At a certain point, additional demands might be counter-productive given the available capacity. Many of the demands are essential, but some

could be reduced or avoided. Any solution must satisfy the twin criteria of (i) minimizing the burden placed on States and (ii) maximizing the effectiveness of measures to ensure respect for human rights (paras. 123-125).

18. Requests based on treaty obligations or emanating from special procedures established by the Charter-based organs should be distinguished from other demands and the principal focus of endeavours to reduce the burden should concentrate on requests emanating from sources other than these two (paras. 126-135).

19. In particular, measures should be taken to reduce the paper warfare against States and non-governmental organizations that currently characterizes the process of preparing much of the documentation sought by the Charter-based organs from the secretariat (para. 134).

20. The consolidation of reporting guidelines with respect to a country profile, which has recently been achieved, is a valuable initiative but serves to address only a part of the much larger problem of overlapping reporting requirements (para. 139).

21. As a result of extensive overlapping in the competences of different treaty bodies, States may be required to report on virtually the same issue to five or more different bodies. In an effort to reduce such duplication each State party should be encouraged to identify for its own purposes the instances in which cross-referencing can be used effectively and appropriately in preparing its reports. If necessary, and if resources are available, interested States should be assisted in that task through the Advisory Services Programme. Each of the treaty bodies might also consider providing some guidance to States parties in this respect (paras. 152).

22. States might also consider designating a specific administrative unit at the national level to coordinate the preparation of all reports to treaty bodies (para. 152).

23. Given the need to better understand existing overlap between ILO and United Nations treaty standards the International Labour Office should be asked to consider updating and expanding for informational purposes the analysis it prepared in 1969, which compares the provisions of relevant ILO Conventions with the standards contained in the United Nations human rights treaties. This could be linked to a more concerted effort by the treaty bodies to take full account of instances in which a State party has already reported to the ILO on the same subject-matter (paras. 142-143 and 155).

24. The meeting of chairpersons should be specifically mandated to consider, on the basis of policy options submitted by the secretariat, how the various committees might reduce overlapping

or duplication in respect to specific issues such as the rights of the child (para. 146-148).

25. The overlapping competences of different treaty bodies can result in a situation in which a State may be required to report on virtually the same issue to several different treaty bodies. In an effort to reduce such duplication each State party should be encouraged to identify for its own purposes the instances in which cross-referencing can effectively and appropriately be used in preparing its reports. Other measures might include designating a specific administrative unit to coordinate the preparation of all such reports. The treaty bodies and the ILO should also contribute to the development of more effective approaches (paras. 149-155).

26. Given the increasing number of specific themes, such as the rights of women, the disabled, the ageing etc., to which all treaty bodies are being asked to pay particular attention, it should be considered whether flexible modalities can be found for allocating primary responsibility for addressing a given dimension of an issue to one body or another (paras. 156-163).

27. Long-term options for reducing reporting burdens should be considered. They include: (i) reducing the number of treaty bodies and hence the number of reports required (paras. 164-166); (ii) encouraging States to produce a single "global" report to be submitted to all relevant treaty bodies (paras. 167-173); and (iii) replacing the requirement of comprehensive periodic reports with specifically-tailored reports (paras. 174-182).

28. Reform of the financing arrangements relating to the treaty bodies is one of the major achievements of recent years. States parties to the two treaties concerned should be urged to ratify the amendments as soon as possible (paras. 183-184).

29. The meeting time available to the treaty bodies as a whole has been expanding steadily, although still insufficiently, and is likely to reach 34 weeks with six weeks of working groups in 1993. That figure may need to be doubled when the system is working effectively (paras. 185-193).

30. Members of all committees should be provided with honoraria, rather than only three out of six as at present (paras. 194-196).

31. The existing levels of secretariat servicing provided to the treaty bodies is entirely inadequate. Computerization needs to be expedited; a documentation unit established; an inventory of committee needs should be drawn up; CEDAW should be serviced by the Centre for Human Rights; specialist expertise must be developed within the secretariat, in the context of a major restructuring of existing servicing arrangements; and greatly increased resources need to be made available (paras. 197-206).

32. The various intergovernmental agencies need to be involved in the work of the treaty bodies, but on a much more discerning basis than current approaches might imply. Overall, effective and targeted coordination needs to be put on the inter-agency agenda in a far more substantive way than hitherto (paras. 209-217).

33. Relations between the treaty bodies and non-governmental organizations are badly in need of review. A non-governmental liaison office needs to be established within the Centre for Human Rights (paras. 218-237).

34. Every effort should be made to maximize normative consistency. As standards proliferate and new treaty bodies are created the risks of inconsistency will continue to grow. Confusion and diminished credibility could result. In the longer term the implications of creating additional treaty bodies need to be very carefully weighed. In the short term, the desirability of seeking normative consistency should be reiterated and every effort made to ensure that any potential inconsistency is brought to the attention of the body concerned by the secretariat (paras. 238-241).

35. The Secretary-General might consider revising or supplementing United Nations Action in the Field of Human Rights so as to provide a more accessible record of the jurisprudence emerging under the various bodies. The development of more specialized expertise within the secretariat should also be considered (paras. 242-243).

36. At present the United Nations and regional human rights treaty bodies pay very little attention to one another's jurisprudence. In order to improve the chances of a coherent overall international human rights regime evolving, and to reduce the likelihood of widely diverging and even directly incompatible approaches and interpretations, efforts need to be made to encourage cross-fertilization. The treaty bodies should be kept informed of developments elsewhere, interaction between the universal and regional systems should become less superficial and more substantive, the respective treaty bodies or their representatives should get together occasionally, and data bases should be developed to enable the jurisprudence of each body to be available to the others (paras. 245-254).

Request for comments to be reflected in the final study

37. The present report is an interim one, as requested by the General Assembly. The final version of the report will be submitted to the Commission on Human Rights at its fiftieth session, in 1994. It should be noted that that version will deal with several other issues not included here, including in particular, public information and advisory services.

38. That version will also take full account of any comments received by the independent expert in the intervening period. Any such comments are warmly invited.